



Being Black: Zen and the Art of Living with Fearlessness and Grace (Compass)

By Angel Kyodo Williams

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Being Black has gained an enthusiastic following in African American and Zen communities. Angel Kyodo Williams shows black Americans how to develop a "warrior-spirit" of truth and responsibility that can lead to happiness and personal transformation. The principles and tools she offers provide a framework for addressing the African American community's unique worries, hopes, challenges, and expectations. Williams uses an eloquent, hip, and honest approach to share personal stories, time-tested teachings, and simple guidelines that invite readers of all faiths to discover how to step into the freedom of a life lived with fearlessness, grace, and fluidity.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

In this exquisite primer on Zen Buddhism, author and ordained Zen priest Angel Kyodo Williams is not trying to convert African Americans into a new religion. Instead, she is simply presenting Zen principles and practices that emphasize living a life of grace and self-acceptance. Having faced the daily challenges of growing up black in America, she is especially adept at showing how these Zen principles apply to the African American experience. "People of color are especially in need of new ways and new answers to the separation and fear we face each day," Kyodo Williams writes. "It wouldn't be a stretch to say that as black people, more than most groups in this country, we live our daily lives with the distinct taste of fear in our mouths.... While the principles offered here are not an antidote to the underlying reasons for our fears, they can give us a different way to approach them."

Kyodo Williams offers a savvy yet tender voice as she walks readers through the basic principles of Zen. It's hard to resist her invitation to take on the numerous sensible vows that lead to enlightenment, such as staying true to the warrior spirit while "committing ourselves to practicing good." The bottom line is that this is a book about claiming the strength, compassion, and integrity that dwell within everyone. And although it speaks to the particular needs and trials of the African American community, readers of all colors and walks of life will find this an irresistible invitation. --*Gail Hudson*

From Publishers Weekly

Compatibility with other traditions is an unsung strength of Buddhism. Here, ordained Zen priest Williams makes a compelling case for African-Americans to embrace this practice that originated far from their fundamental roots on the continent of Africa. Although she does not advocate that African-Americans replace their traditional religions with Buddhism, she does believe that Zen's practical approach to ordinary life can help them, noting also that Buddha was a brown-skinned person. Williams, who is African-American, quite comfortably employs black vernacular, balancing such light moments with meatier discourses on the particular history and weight of blackness. Williams's primary thrust, however, encompasses the basic whats, hows and especially the whys of Buddhism. Under her effective touch, such concepts as Bodhisattva Vows, Pure Precepts and the Eightfold Path become accessible possibilities for a better everyday life. Postures and procedures round out this unassuming primer that squarely embraces Zen (meaning "meditation"). With subtle persuasion and highly readable prose, Williams advocates that a "warrior spirit" of truth and responsibility is a good fit for people who "want to know how to be here in this life and be okay just as we are." She has reached well beyond her stated audience, for to whom does this not apply? (Oct.)

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From [Booklist](#)

Williams, an ordained Zen priest, offers the universal wisdom of Buddhist principles as a resource in the everyday struggle of black Americans to cope with racism. Acknowledging the spiritual sustenance provided by traditional black churches, Williams explores the potential that Buddhism provides for helping individuals attain peace and self-awareness. Although she advocates the "warrior spirit" of truth and responsibility individually and communally, Williams does not deny the continued existence of racism. She offers Buddhist principles, not dogma, as a means of achieving peace and fortification in that struggle. She recounts her own search for tranquillity among the frantic pace and materialistic concerns of American life that lead to her exploration of the Buddhist religion. Martin Luther King Jr., Nelson Mandela, and Gandhi preached and

practiced spiritual enlightenment that helped them in their struggles against injustice. Williams provides practical advice on achieving goals, economic as well as spiritual, in the search for an inner peace through meditation, yoga, and other practices of Buddhism in this inspirational book. *Vanessa Bush*
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Users Review

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In this 21st century, people become competitive in every way. By being competitive now, people have to do something to make these people survive, being in the middle of often the crowded place and notice simply by surrounding. One thing that at times many people have underestimated it for a while is reading. That's why, by reading a book your ability to survive improve then having chance to stand than other is high. To suit your needs who want to start reading any book, we give you this specific *Being Black: Zen and the Art of Living with Fearlessness and Grace (Compass)* book as starter and daily reading e-book. Why, because this book is greater than just a book.

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People live in this new time of lifestyle always attempt to and must have the free time or they will get wide range of stress from both daily life and work. So, whenever we ask do people have spare time, we will say absolutely without a doubt. People is human not just a robot. Then we question again, what kind of activity do you have when the spare time coming to you actually of course your answer may unlimited right. Then do you ever try this one, reading books. It can be your alternative within spending your spare time, the book you have read is *Being Black: Zen and the Art of Living with Fearlessness and Grace (Compass)*.

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